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September 14, 2010

AGENDA ITEM 4c

TO: MEMBERS OF THE BENEFITS AND PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

- I. SUBJECT:** Proposed Amendments to Board Election Regulation Section 554.4 Candidate Statements
- II. PROGRAM:** Administration
- III. RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the Committee accept and the Board approve the proposed amendments to the Board Election Regulation 554.4 Candidate Statements for publication.
- IV. ANALYSIS:**

Historically, there has been a low percentage of voter participation in the Board of Administration (Board) election process. The issue of increasing voter participation has been addressed in the past by the CalPERS Board. In the March 2010 Benefits and Program Administration Committee (BPAC) meeting, staff recommended several new actions to increase voter participation.

One of the actions recommended was increasing the length of candidate statements from the current 200 word statement and the 100 word addendum. In order to increase the number of words for the statement and addendum, a regulation change is required. Staff was directed to pursue this action for the 2011 Retired Members Board Election.

Background and History

The candidate statement booklet, published by CalPERS, is very important and is one of the sources of comprehensive candidate information presented to members by CalPERS. Through the candidate statement booklet information, members can make an evaluation of the candidates and then make an informed selection on the ballot. By increasing the number of words allowed on the candidate statement:

- Candidates will have the opportunity to expand on their qualifications and position on issues in the CalPERS official election document that is mailed to members.

- Members will have more information from the candidates to help them make their voting decision.
- Potentially could increase interest in the elections leading to higher voter return.

As stated previously, a regulation change would be required to increase the number of words in the candidate statement and addendum. Staff recommends approval the Proposed Changes to Board Election Regulations 554.4 Candidate Statements (Attachment A) to allow the maximum number of words on the candidate statement to 300 words, and the maximum number of words on the addendum to 300 words for a maximum total of 600 words. The increase in words will not result in an increase in the number of pages in the candidate statement booklet or an increase in the printing and postage costs of the booklet. A sample of the proposed candidate statement and addendum layout to reflect 300 words each is attached for your information (Attachment B). *Please note, Attachment B contains "lorem ipsum or greeking text" for sample purposes only.*

Upon approval from the Board to proceed with the regulation change, the following regulation amendment process is planned:

- Publication of the Notice of Proposed Regulatory Action package in the California Regulatory Notice Register;
- A minimum 45 day written comment period;
- A public hearing scheduled for the BPAC meeting;
- Final Board approval;
- Transmission to the Office of Administrative Law for filing with the Secretary of State and publication in the California Code of Regulations.

The amended regulations will become effective 30 days after filing with the Secretary of State. If no changes are made to the regulations during the comment period, the amendments to Section 554.4 could take effect in time for the 2011 Retired Members Board Election.

V. STRATEGIC PLAN:

This item is not a specific part of the Strategic Plan, but is part of the regular and ongoing workload of the Operations Support Services Division.

VI. RESULTS/COSTS:

There is no cost associated with the recommended increase in words in the candidate statement.

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Attachments